

Good Afternoon, as an African American General Manager for The Atlas Restaurant Group I feel I have a responsibility to clear up some misconceptions. Alex and Eric Smith sought me out for this role in their premier property. I already had a job, and was settled in my role. I came to interview as I always keep doors open for new and exciting opportunities. I was excited by this opportunity in particular as it was with a growing company. Quite honestly what was said to me in my interviews was what sold me more than the salary, the property, or prestige that comes with a job such as this one. I was going to be working for people that cared, not that say they care, but genuinely care. They employ over 1200 people and pride themselves on bringing quality jobs to a city that quite frankly doesn't seem to have too many. They were opening Atlas Farms to be locally sourced and that too would employ more local people. They had 3-5 projects in the pipelines to help revitalize places that once stood for something. These guys were all about Baltimore and investing back into the city. I'll be the first to tell you they are no different today than the day I interviewed and emphatically said, "Yes I'll take this job". That's the background. We had a dress code at The Bygone. Alex told me the very first day, "listen, I don't care if my mom and the Pope show up at the same time. If they are not in dress code, they don't get in, period". So I took that very seriously, as to me having a dress code, is just another way of saying we have standards. We have to have standards right? In NY I know of restaurants you can't walk into unless you know someone. They don't even need a dress code, you just get judged at the door and you're not cool enough or make enough money...you don't get in. Here at The Bygone we simply ask that you adhere to our standards. You are dining on the rooftop of The Four Seasons hotel. All my managers are in 3 piece suits, my service staff are dressed impeccably, and the guests are here for an elevated experience. Alex and Eric both visit The Bygone when they make their rounds and like everyone else are dressed the part. There was an incident back when Gordon Ramsey was in town, he stayed at The Four Seasons. I got a text from my hostess and she said, "Gordon Ramsey is down here but he's in tennis shoes and a hoodie". As I was brand new, I called Alex to double check that my call of "absolutely not" was ok. Alex without hesitation said, " Simon like I told you before I don't care who it is, the answer is no". I went to the lobby and told her "he's out of dress code, it's a no go just like everyone else". Mr. Ramsey immediately understood as he has very similar dress codes at all of his restaurants. People thought I was crazy. I'm not crazy, I just treat everyone the exact same way. We don't care how much money you make, what type of car you drive, what your last name is, or where you live. We care about your experience at our restaurants. You must have standards to do that and do it well. In closing I'll say this.... I have never in my 25 years in this business felt more included and that my voice means something as I do here at Atlas. It pained me to watch the incident at Ouzo Bay. It also pained me greatly to watch what the fallout was from it. I emphatically tell you and will repeat until everyone hears me, I do not work for a racist group. Did we make a huge mistake? 100%. Will we all learn from this and be better immediately? 100%. This can be and will be a teaching and learning point for a lot of people. I'm available day or night and the doors to The Bygone are open for anyone.

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Simon Brown  
General Manager  
The Bygone Restaurant



To Whom it may concern,  
Good Afternoon.

I wanted to express my opinion on how the Atlas Restaurant Group is being perceived right now. Before I go into that let me tell you about my career with this company.

I have worked for the Atlas Restaurant Group for 5 years now. From day 1 they treated me with the upmost respect and have continued to drive me to grow within the company. In this day and time it's unfortunate that I have to say that I'm African American, with that being said I've been in the industry for 25 years and have never worked for a better organization than the Atlas Restaurant Group.

It is very unfortunate that one of our managers made a bad decision and that's why we are where we are. This Restaurant Group takes pride in what they do and takes care of all of their employees and guests regardless of their race.

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Jason Madison  
Assistant General Manager  
Maximon



Antonio Fliggins/Host Entertainment Services LLC

My company has been rendered services for restaurants, bars, clubs and special events for numerous of years through out the Baltimore metro area. My company is minority owned also my staff is about 95% minorities. My company has been employed by Atlas Restaurants Group sine February of 2018. While Securing most of the properties for Atlas Restaurants my company has never discriminated or targeted anyone because of color, gender or religion, Neither has Atlas Restaurants ever instructed my company to do so. Over the past two and half years my company has never witness any racism or discrimination to any minorities or people of color. The dress code and rules are enforce to everyone that visit any of the establishments of Atlas Restaurants Groups. We have turned away celebrities and family members of the owners who were not incompliance with the dress code and rules. The dress code, rules and policies of Atlas Restaurants are in no way to target any specific group or individuals. We want everyone who comes to any of the restaurants to experience a fun, safe and upscale environment.



**Working for Atlas restaurant group has been an amazing experience. From my humble beginnings as a security guard at Lochbar just working weekends, to becoming head of security for Lochbar ,Azumi, Tagliata ,Elk Room and Italian Disco i have seen tremendous growth not only for the company but the city. That's why I'm still here I believe in the vision and the slogan "cityneedsit" . I'm a black man who has never felt any semblance of racism from Management or its staff members . While the video acted a sad reminder of the horror racism plays in our society today it should never be a representation of the Atlas Restaurant family. In closing I am proud to represent this company and look forward to continued success and growth for myself and the city I love more than anything. The city needs Atlas but Atlas will and always need the city.**

**Demetrius Brandon**

To whom it may concern, Alex Smith, owner of Ouzo Bay where I reside as General Manager has always been very adamant about our dress code. This dress code had been implemented since our reopening. Alex has gone so far as instructing management to not make exceptions for his own family members. I feel it's horrendous for anyone to assume Atlas Restaurant Groups dress code is racially motivated. I am an African American man proud to be a part of the Atlas Restaurant Family.

**Rodney Winkler**

General Manager

**Ouzo Bay Restaurant**

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